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UPDATES: 1994 Cropland Use

Data updates from the Resources and Technology Division

Economic Research Service
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Cropland Use Up, Crop Failure and Idled Cropland Down From 1993

- Cropland estimated to be harvested in 1994 totals 311 million acres, up from 299 million last year and the largest area harvested since 1986.
- One reason for the increased area harvested is a sharp drop in cropland idled in Federal programs in 1994.
- Another reason is the lowest level of crop failure since 1991.

This issue of RTD UPDATES summarizes aggregate cropland estimates based heavily on surveys conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the first two weeks of June. Participation in the price support and production adjustment programs are based on the USDA's report of the Preliminary Results of 1994 Program Signup and on reports of participation in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

An estimated 340 million cropland acres are expected to be used for crops in 1994, up 8 million from 1993 and the same as in 1992 (table 1). This increase resulted from a smaller estimated crop failure and a rather sharp decline in cropland idled by annual crop programs.

Harvest estimates of principal crops total 309 million acres. When minor crops are included, total harvested acres will likely rise to more than 322 million acres. Nearly 11

million of the harvested acres are estimated to be double cropped. Allowing for double cropping, cropland harvested will total more than 311 million acres, up nearly 13 million acres from 1993.

Estimated cropland harvested is up 11 percent in the Lake States, more than 7 percent in the Southeast, and 6 percent in the Corn Belt. Crop failure is estimated to be down, especially in the Corn Belt, and Lake States regions.

Cropland idled by annual Federal crop programs was down 11 million acres in 1994. Crop base acres idled by the CRP are unchanged from last year. All of the program crops but cotton had a zero ARP for 1994. Therefore, except for cotton, all of the idled base acres in annual programs are enrolled in the voluntary 0/85-92 and 50/85-92 programs (table 4). Part of the idled cotton acreage is enrolled in these programs as well.

Preliminary data on crop base flexing in 1994 indicates large acreages flexed out of corn into soybeans and out of wheat into other program crops (table 5). As in past years, soybeans accounted for a large portion of the net change in cropland use from the flex provisions. Also as in earlier years, cotton was the only program crop with a net increase in acreage from the crop base flex.

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RTD UPDATES is a semimonthly series featuring data relating to agricultural resources, the environment, food safety, and technology. These UPDATES report recent data from surveys of farm operators and others knowledgeable about changing agricultural resource conditions, with only minimal interpretation or analysis. Please contact the individual listed at the end of the text for additional information about the data in this UPDATE. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or have other questions about RTD UPDATES, contact Richard Magleby, (202) 219-0436.

Major Uses of U.S. Cropland

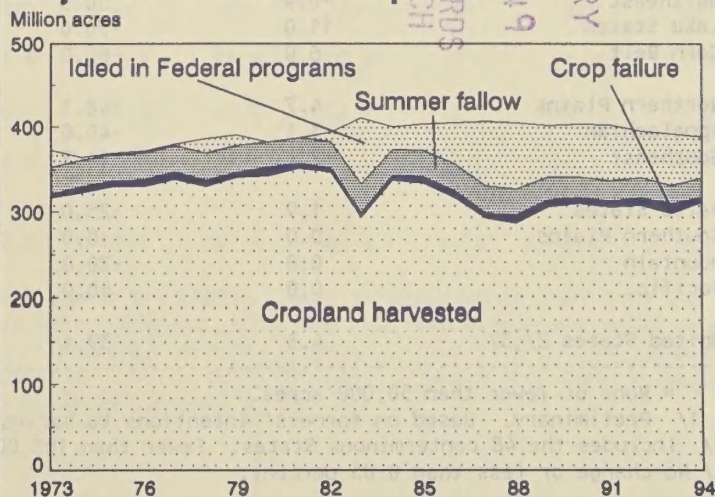


Table 1--Major uses of cropland, United States, 1985-94 1/

Cropland	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992 2/	1993 2/	1994 2/
Million acres										
Cropland used for crops	372	357	331	327	341	341	337	340	332	340
Cropland harvested 3/	334	316	293	287	306	310	306	308	299	311
Crop failure	7	9	6	10	8	6	7	9	11	7
Cultivated summer fallow	31	32	32	30	27	25	24	23	22	22
Cropland idled by all										
Federal programs 4/	31	48	76	78	61	62	65	55	60	49
Annual programs	31	46	60	53	31	28	30	20	23	12
Long-term programs	0	2	16	25	30	34	35	35	36	36
Total, specified uses 4/,5/	403	405	407	405	402	403	402	395	391	389

1/ Includes the 48 conterminous states. Fewer than 100,000 acres were used for the principal crops in Alaska and Hawaii. 2/ Preliminary, subject to revision. 3/ A double-cropped acre is counted as one acre. 4/ Breakdown may not add to totals due to rounding. 5/ Does not include cropland pasture or idle land not in Federal programs that is normally included in the total cropland base.

Source: USDA, various published and unpublished data.

Table 2--Cropland used for crops in 1994, and 1993-94 change, by region

Region	Cropland used for crops 1/				Share of all cropland used for crops
	Cropland harvested	Crop failure	Summer fallow	Total 2/	
1993:	-----Million acres-----				Percent
Northeast	10.8	0.3	-	11.1	3.3
Lake States	34.4	0.7	-	35.1	10.3
Corn Belt	81.1	0.9	-	82.0	24.1
Northern Plains	75.3	1.4	10.5	87.2	25.7
Appalachian	16.5	0.3	-	16.8	4.9
Southeast	10.1	0.6	-	10.7	3.1
Delta States	15.8	0.3	-	16.1	4.7
Southern Plains	27.2	1.5	0.7	29.4	8.7
Mountain	24.7	0.4	8.0	33.1	9.7
Pacific	15.5	0.3	2.4	18.2	5.4
United States 2/	311.4	6.7	21.6	339.7	100.0
1992-93 change:	-----Percent-----				
Northeast	-0.9	50.0	4/	0.0	
Lake States	11.0	-50.0	4/	8.3	
Corn Belt	6.0	-69.0	4/	3.3	
Northern Plains	4.7	-48.1	-1.9	2.2	
Appalachian	3.1	-40.0	4/	1.8	
Southeast	7.4	-14.3	4/	5.9	
Delta States	1.9	-25.0	4/	1.3	
Southern Plains	0.0	-0.0	-12.5	-0.3	
Mountain	0.0	-20.0	0.0	-0.3	
Pacific	0.0	50.0	-4.0	0.0	
United States 2/,3/	4.3	-39.1	-1.8	2.4	

- = None or fewer than 50,000 acres.

1/ Preliminary. Based on farmers' intentions to harvest. 2/ Breakdown may not add to totals due to rounding.

3/ Includes the 48 conterminous States. Fewer than 100,000 acres were used for the principal crops in Alaska and Hawaii.

4/ No change or less than 0.05 percent.

Source: USDA, various published and unpublished data.

Table 3--Cropland idled under Federal acreage reduction programs, by region, 1985-94

Region	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994 1/
Million acres										
Northeast	0.2	0.5	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.4
Lake States	2.0	4.2	7.0	6.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.0	5.6	3.4
Corn Belt	3.8	8.5	15.3	13.9	8.8	9.0	8.2	7.3	10.0	6.0
Northern Plains	10.1	14.3	19.7	20.8	15.8	16.8	18.4	14.8	15.0	12.2
Appalachian	0.5	1.3	2.7	3.0	2.3	2.3	2.1	1.9	2.1	1.8
Southeast	0.7	1.3	3.0	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
Delta States	1.9	2.4	3.5	3.1	3.0	2.6	2.7	2.2	2.4	2.1
Southern Plains	5.9	8.3	11.7	12.0	10.0	9.8	11.0	9.0	9.1	8.6
Mountain	3.9	5.4	8.7	10.2	9.1	9.6	10.5	9.3	9.1	8.5
Pacific	1.6	2.2	3.5	3.8	3.2	3.1	3.6	3.1	2.9	2.8
United States 2/ 3/	30.7	48.1	76.2	77.7	60.8	61.6	64.5	54.9	59.8	48.5

1/ Preliminary. 2/ Includes the 48 conterminous States. Because of rounding, regional data may not sum to U.S. totals. 3/ Includes cropland idled by 0/92 and 50/92 programs from 1986 through 1992, except for about 0.5 million acres in 1991, 0.7 million acres in 1992, 0.8 million acres in 1993, and 1.3 million acres in 1994 enrolled in 0/92 or 50/92 programs and planted to minor oilseeds. Also includes cropland acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve program (see tables 1 and 4).

Source: USDA, ASCS, various published and unpublished data.

Table 4--Cropland idled under Federal acreage reduction programs by crop base acres, United States, 1985-94

Program and crop	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994 1/
Million acres										
Annual programs, base acres:										
Corn	5.4	14.2	23.2	20.5	10.8	10.7	7.4	5.2	10.7	2.0
Sorghum	0.9	2.9	4.1	3.9	3.3	3.3	2.4	2.0	2.2	1.5
Barley	0.7	2.0	3.0	2.8	2.3	2.9	2.1	2.3	2.2	1.9
Oats	0.1	0.5	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.5
Wheat	18.8	21.0	23.9	22.5	9.6	7.5	15.6	7.3	5.4	4.2
Cotton	3.6	4.0	3.9	2.2	3.5	2.0	1.2	1.7	1.4	1.7
Rice	1.2	1.5	1.6	1.1	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.2
Total, annual programs 2/	30.7	46.1	60.5	53.3	30.9	27.7	30.1	19.5	23.4	12.1
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), base acres: 3/										
Corn		0.2	2.3	2.8	3.4	3.8	3.9	4.1	4.3	4.3
Sorghum		0.2	1.2	1.9	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5
Barley		0.1	1.1	1.9	2.4	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
Oats		0.1	0.5	0.9	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4
Wheat		0.6	4.2	7.1	8.8	10.3	10.4	10.6	10.8	10.8
Cotton		0.1	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4
Rice		4/	4/	4/	4/	4/	4/	4/	4/	4/
Total CRP-idled base acres 2/		1.2	10.0	15.5	19.0	21.8	22.0	22.6	23.3	23.3
Total base acres idled 2/	30.7	47.4	70.5	68.8	49.9	49.5	52.1	42.1	46.7	35.4
Total CRP-idled nonbase acres		0.7	5.7	8.9	10.9	12.1	12.4	12.8	13.2	13.2
Total cropland idled under Federal programs 2/	30.7	48.1	76.2	77.7	60.8	61.6	64.5	54.9	58.8	48.5

1/ Preliminary. 2/ Because of rounding, crop acreages may not sum to the totals. Base acreages idled under 0/92 and 50/92 programs from 1986 through 1992 are included in annual program data. However, base acres of feed grains and wheat enrolled in 0/92 and planted to oilseeds in 1991 (0.5 million acres), in 1992 (0.7 million acres), in 1993 (1.0 million acres), and in 1994 (1.3 million acres) are not included. 3/ Program began in 1986. Small acreages of peanut and tobacco base were bid into the CRP in addition to the crops listed. 4/ Less than 50,000 acres.

Source: USDA, ASCS, various published and unpublished data.

Table 5--Use of crop base flex area by program crop, United States, 1994 1/

1994 Use of flex area	Program crop base acreage flexed							Total 2/
	Corn	Sorghum	Barley	Oats	Wheat	Cotton	Rice	
	Thousand acres							
Flexed from other program crops	770	390	97	56	756	531	29	2,629
Flexed to other program crops	-478	-303	-317	-245	-1,306	-132	-53	-2,833
Flexed to nonprogram crops:								
Soybeans	-2,279	-179	-48	-32	-613	-28	-144	-3,323
Minor oilseeds	-44	-6	-62	-10	-168	-2	-7	-299
Other nonprogram crops	-124	-16	-45	-13	-240	-13	-17	-468
Subtotal - Nonprogram crops 2/	-2,447	-200	-156	-55	-1,021	-43	-168	-4,090
Net change from flex provisions 2/	-2,156	-114	-376	-243	-1,571	356	-191	-4,295
Normal flex acres 3/	-10,028	-1,647	-1,352	-425	-10,193	-2,037	-588	-26,270
Optional flex acres 4/	-6,685	-1,098	-901	-283	-6,795	-1,358	-392	-17,513
Total flex acres possible 2/	-16,713	-2,745	-2,253	-708	-16,988	-3,396	-980	-43,784

1/ A negative number indicates the area flexed (or available for flexing) out of the crop heading the column to another crop. A positive number indicates the area flexed into the crop heading the column from another program crop.
 2/ Distributions may not add to totals due to rounding. 3/ Normal flex acres were computed as 15 percent of enrolled base acres of the program crops. 4/ Optional flex acres could be up to an additional two-thirds of the normal flex acres (10 percent of enrolled base acres).

Source: USDA, OPA, "Preliminary Results of 1994 Program Signup," Release No. 0429.94, June 3, 1994.

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